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ABSTRACT

This document is intended to assist individuals responsible for completing the annual development plan required of all community-based adult literacy programs seeking funding from Manitoba's (Canada) Literacy and Continuing Education Branch. A sample development plan is presented to illustrate the initiative, reflection, and planning needed to complete a development plan properly. The document begins with basic background information about the purpose and content of development plans and presents an overview of the structure and elements of the model plan provided. The following components are included in the model development plan: explanation of funding amounts, sources, and problems during the 1994-1995 program year and a breakdown of the actual dollar amounts allocated for specific budget items; discussion of projected funding needs for 1995-1996; brief description of additional funding sources; explanation of the program's organizing (including expansion and marketing) efforts; statement of the program's teaching plan; description of activities in the areas of staff development and support/advice; and assessment of the program's specific needs and wants, including a breakdown of the dollar amounts needed for specific program operating costs and activities. (MN)

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ED 392 918

LOOKING FORWARD: LOOKING BACK

A model *Development Plan* for a community-based literacy program

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LOOKING FORWARD: LOOKING BACK

A MODEL

Background

The Literacy and Continuing Education Branch requires the provincially funded community-based adult literacy programs to annually complete the Good Practice Guide. This is a program evaluation tool involving input from the learners, practitioners, and the literacy working group. An important part of the Good Practice Guide is the completion of a Development Plan. The Development Plan focuses on what the program has accomplished and identifies plans for improvements to the program.

Each year, the Literacy and Continuing Education Branch receives development plans that demonstrate a great deal of thought and hard work. This is certainly true of the example we have provided here. This sample is based on an actual Development Plan provided by a community-based program that currently receives funding from the Branch. Although this is only one sample, it shows the initiative, reflection, and planning needed to move literacy programming forward.

In order to provide some anonymity, the name of the program has been omitted.

Overview of the Plan

The plan explains how the program has budgeted their funds and their fundraising initiatives. The program's long-term fundraising of three years has culminated in the purchase of a computer with a CD-Rom drive. This will be an asset to the instructional program as well as expose students to equipment currently used in the business community. The majority of the program funds are allocated to the provision of instruction. This is made possible by the Centre's donation of classroom and office space, photocopying, equipment, secretarial support, and utilities.

The plan also focuses on any changes in how the program is being delivered. The program decided to employ a full time assistant in the classroom and decrease the hours of the senior instructor so that they wouldn't have to compromise the total number of hours the program is offered. By offering the program for 22 hours a week over 39 weeks, they were in a better position to accommodate unemployment insurance recipients who require at least this level of instruction. The program was given "Directability" status by Canada Employment Services which means they will refer unemployment insurance recipients to the classes and as students in the program, they are not required to do weekly job searches.

The plan indicates the research and responsiveness of the literacy working group and staff to the changes in educational provision in the community. As a result of the college no longer providing upgrading and an increasing number of students indicating a goal of grade 12 standing, the classes have incorporated more advanced academics. The program is pursuing a partnership with the local college and school division to establish a method of evaluation/creditation for their students.

THE PROGRAM'S DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Funding 1994-1995

The funding grant for the 1994-1995 school year was $34,800. The major portion of the grant is allocated for salary. Our instructor receives $18.00 per hour. Currently our program runs for 39 weeks with 32 hours per week of paid time. We also have an assistant in our program. The assistant is scheduled for 25 hours per week. She was paid $8.00 per hour for the first 19 weeks while she was in training. She completed the Level 1 training offered by Literacy and Continuing Education in October and has begun Level 2 training. As well, she received on-the-job training from our instructor. The salary was increased to $10.00 per hour for the remaining 20 weeks. All materials and supplies necessary for classroom work are supplied to the students by the program. Resource dollars for the year were spent on software for our new computer. We are very pleased that we have been able to purchase a computer with a CD drive. This new computer will allow our students the opportunity to work with equipment that is currently in use in the business community. As well, resources were set aside to allow for training opportunities for the program staff.

Due to the high cost of computer hardware, we have only been able to purchase one computer. This was purchased through fundraising dollars that have been accumulated for the purpose of its purchase. It has been a long time coming as it has taken over three years to raise the funds. The computer is being put to good use by the students and is a very essential tool in the classroom.

We do have funding difficulties in the program. The instructor's salary for the 39-week period at 32 hours per week plus benefits totals approximately $24,700. The salary for the assistant at 39 weeks for 25 hours per week plus benefits totals approximately $10,700. This brings the total salary and benefits to approximately $35,400. Because we have other expenses in the program such as materials and supplies, photocopying, professional development, etc., we have a shortfall in funding. In order to meet our budget guideline and keep the program running for 39 weeks, our instructor's salary was cut to approximately $19,700. Unfortunately, it also meant that she was out of the program for a period of eight weeks. A classroom aide was hired. For the eight week period, the assistant and the aide were in the classroom with the students for three days of the week and the instructor and the assistant were in the classroom for one day of the week. The instructor kept in contact with the assistant and provided assistance to her.

This is not an ideal situation, but the alternatives are worse. A number of alternatives including fewer classroom hours per week, reducing the number of instructional weeks, and having no assistant in the program were discussed. The instructor assured us that reducing her salary was the lesser of the four evils and the one she preferred to see. She did not want weekly contact hours or instructional weeks reduced as she felt that an increase in hours and weeks is required, not a reduction. She also strongly recommended that the classroom assistant be maintained as the benefits to the students and the program are enormous. This left only one alternative and that was to reduce the instructor's salary.

1994 - 1995 budget		$ 34,800
Salary - instructor		19,758
Salary - assistant		9,256
Salary - aide		891
Benefits		2,295
Materials and supplies		1,200
Photocopying of student material		800
Professional development		600
	TOTAL	$ 69,600

Funding Needs 1995-1996

The 1995-1996 school year is going to be a year of challenges for us in our upgrading program. With the changing entrance requirements for many college courses and GED no longer having the standing it once had, most of our students are stating grade 12 standing as their goal. Of the 18 current students, 16 have stated this goal. One of the 16 is a grade 11 graduate who is not academically prepared as yet to attempt the grade 12 course. One other is a 15 year old who experienced difficulty functioning in the school system. Fourteen are typical adult students found in any of our programs. The remaining two students are level 1 and their immediate goals are simply to learn basic reading, writing, and math.

Because of this shift in stated goals, our instructor has been gathering information regarding the proposed Downtown Learning Centre. This Centre is to be a joint project between the community college and the school division. Their focus has shifted from a comprehensive program to high school credits for adult learners. The college is planning on offering the Mature Student High School Program beginning in the fall of 1995. As you are aware, this will require students to take four Senior 4 courses and two others to complete the certificate. There is no plan to put in place any other form of upgrading to replace the old Developmental Studies Program. At this point, a student wishing to go to university or the college must have either achieved entry level for the chosen course or be able to gain direct entry into the Mature Student High School Program. For students who are not at this academic level, there is no place in the community where the necessary upgrading can be obtained. We believe our program has the ability to provide this essential service to our community. We have the expertise and the space to provide students with the necessary classes.

Our instructor has spoken with the Manager of the Adult Learning Centre at the college. He believes that a partnership should be developed between the Adult Upgrading Program, the community college, and the school division, and we agree.

A partnership with the school division would allow our upgrading class to offer Manitoba standing at the junior and early high school levels by following Manitoba curriculum. We need to work with the school division to establish a method of evaluation/creditation for our students.

For a successful partnership, we need to increase both weekly contact hours and extend the school year. Currently, funding allows us to offer 22 hours of weekly contact from September to May. In order to follow the division school calendar, we would need to have 25 weekly contact hours and have the class remain in session until the end of June.

Resources for the students are also a requirement. A partnership with the school division will provide us with the required texts. However, we will require a library of additional material. This means the purchase of more resources, as formerly very little material was needed at this advanced level. In addition, because of the interest in the new computer, our instructor would like to purchase more software for student use.

Funding Sources

The grant received for the running of our program is $34,800. As stated above, it is not sufficient for the purpose of adequately funding the program. We are exploring fundraising efforts in order to supplement our finances. We are extremely fortunate to be associated with the Centre as they allow us free use of classroom space, photocopying equipment, office space, secretarial support, telephone, light, and heat. We have acquired the use of another office space which has been turned into a small breakout room in which small group discussions and one-to-one instruction away from the main classroom are held. Without this invaluable support from the Centre, which means thousands of dollars of in-kind contribution, our program would indeed be in dire straits.

Organizing

We are very pleased to have been given "Directability" status from Canada Employment Services in January. This means that a person receiving unemployment insurance benefits can access our programming without having to do weekly job search. It also means that Canada Employment can direct and unemployment insurance recipient to attend classes in our program. Achieving this status has allowed two students to attend classes with us. It is also one of the reasons why the instructor did not want to have a reduction in contact hours. Directability requires a minimum of 25 contact hours. Because the program had established a good working relationship with Canada Employment in the past, the 25-hour requirement was waived for us. It is, however, important that we maintain a minimum of 22 contact hours in order to remain directable. It should also be pointed out that both of these students have found full-time employment in the past two weeks.

As in the past, we have not gone out of our way to publicize our program because we are always operating at capacity. We have set up displays or have placed our information pamphlets with the Centre's displays during such events as the Immigrant Women's Workshop on Discrimination, the Coalition for Literacy Services Book Launch, the Wellness Conference, and the National Association of Friendship Centres Annual General Meeting. These have always been well received by the participants and there usually is some community contact as a result.

Our classes have begun to take on a new dimension with the incorporation of more advanced academics. As stated earlier, many of the students in our program now need more time and more instruction in order to be bale to access further training or education because of the cancellation of Developmental Studies at the local college. In addition, many of our students who had planned on using GED standing to gain access to further education now find that the GED is no longer accepted. As a result, we have a larger number of students who need more advanced academics and more time in the program to prepare for their future training.

We have also had in our program this year a substantial increase in the number of older teenagers who for a variety of reasons can no longer access education through the school division. Most of these students want to return to the public system, but require a measure of upgrading in order to be able to adequately function in the system. No public aged student is allowed to register in our program unless it is that student's intent to return to the public system. A great deal of thought has gone into the decision to allow eligible public school students into the program. It was decided that most of them are potentially future students for our program and we felt it best to offer prevention now, rather than catch up later.

It is the intention of the LWG to approach the school division in the hopes of establishing a working relationship with them. We hope to be able to offer to all of our students the ability to receive Manitoba school credits for the work that they are doing in the class by using school division texts and following Manitoba curriculum guidelines. This will benefit all of our students.

Teaching Plan

With the intent of establishing a working relationship with the school division for Manitoba credits for the students, the focus for a large number of students will shift to a more structured curriculum. For those students wishing to work toward Manitoba standing, the program will be less student-driven with regards to material choice than in previous years. However, the student-centred approach will remain the same. We will continue to work on individualized programming, and one-to-one instruction. For those students who do not wish to attain Manitoba credits, the program will function for them as it has in the past.

We are fortunate to have an instructor in our program who holds both a Manitoba Professional Teaching Certificate and a Special Education Certificate. Her qualifications afford us the opportunity to approach the school division with the intent of establishing a working relationship. In order to effectively meet the stated needs of the majority of our students, it is necessary that Manitoba credits be offered. With the support of the Literacy and Continuing Education Branch, it can be done.

Staff Development

Our staff is very happy with the training that is available to them. They have found that the workshops, conferences, and instructor get-togethers offered by the Literacy Branch, Westman Regional Network, Literacy Partners of Manitoba, and the Coalition for Literacy Services have afforded them many opportunities for professional development. In addition, both staff members will be attending the Aboriginal Literacy Conference in Kelowna in June.

Our instructor has also attended workshops and information sessions offered by other community agencies.

Support and Advice

The staff and administration of the Centre, the Literacy Working Group, the Literacy and Continuing Education Branch, the members of the Coalition for Literacy Services, and the Westman Regional Network offer support and advice to our instructor and assistant whenever there is a need. As well, our instructor has many community contacts if she has need of advice and support.

Specific Needs and Wants

Our most urgent need is an increase in grant dollars. In order to offer a comprehensive course of study to our students, we need to facilitate major changes in some components of our program. This has been necessitated by changes within our community -- the local community college no longer offers an upgrading program and has raised entrance requirements, GED no longer has the acceptability it once had, and the school division has instituted a no-tolerance policy for their students. Because of these changes within the community, we have found students need more advanced academics, which in turn requires a longer stay in our program. The longer time period required to accomplish stated goals has the immediate effect of reducing the number of students the program can accommodate within a year.

In order to meet these changing community needs, we feel it is necessary for our program to increase the number of contact weeks from 39 (September to May) to 43 (September to June). In addition, we feel that an increase in contact hours from 22 to 25 per week would more closely match what the public school system offers and meets Canada Employment's directionality requirements as well.

As stated earlier, with the current level of funding, our instructor can only be paid for approximately 32 to 33 weeks. Also, the assistant can only be paid for 25 hours per week. We feel it is essential that both the instructor and the assistant be given 35 hours of paid time. This would allow for 25 contact hours per week and give them an average of 10 hours for correcting, preparation, curriculum development and professional development.

At the present time, our program is the only "close to full time" program in the community. More and more students are asking for full-time opportunities because they have a lot of catching up to do in order to be able to access further training. For a large number of the students, attending a few hours per week simply will take too long for them to meet their goals.

At the present time, our instructor is being paid $18.00 per hour for 32 hours per week. The assistant is receiving $10.00 per hour. We would like to increase the assistant's salary to $12.00 per hour and increase the hours to 35 per week. We have been assured by the instructor that the assistant is an asset to the program and will continue to improve her teaching skills as she has more opportunity for professional development and as her classroom experience grows. This would allow the assistant to be employed full-time in the program rather than on a part-time basis. In addition, we would like to increase the instructor's paid time to 35 hours per week.

In summary, an increased budget would allow our program to more readily meet the stated needs of a large percentage of our students. This would be accomplished through increased contact hours per week and increased number of contact weeks. Because the assistant has shown her value to the students and the instructor over the past year, we feel it appropriate to offer her a full-time position should funding allow.

Both the instructor and the assistant put in many hours of overtime, for which they cannot be paid, in order to have the program function as it does. Without this dedication, we would not have the excellent program which we have now.

In summary, our financial needs are as follows:

Salary - instructor	$ 27,090
Salary - assistant	18,060
Benefits	4,967
Materials and supplies	500
Professional development	2,000
Photocopying of student material	800
Fundraising and publicity	2,000
Resources	1,200
TOTAL	$ 55,617

We are in the planning stages of a major fundraising event for the fall. More and more of our students want to learn keyboarding and word processing as they recognize them as essential skills in today's job market. To meet this goal of our students, we need to purchase more computers. Dollars raised would be used for such capital expenses.